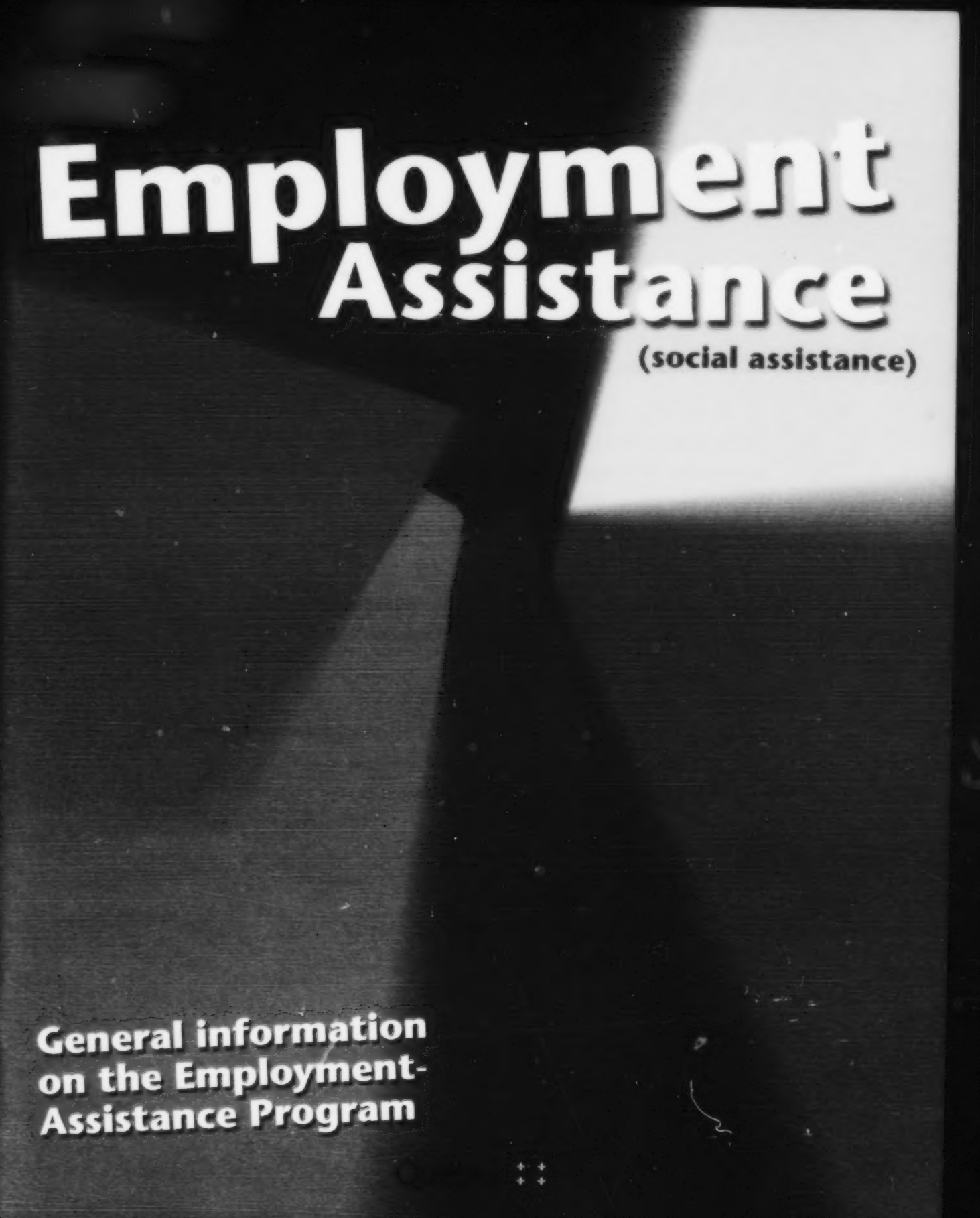

Employment Assistance

(social assistance)

General information on the Employment-Assistance Program

THE EMPLOYMENT-ASSISTANCE COLLECTION

This brochure is a general information document on last-resort financial assistance. This assistance, commonly called "social assistance," is paid under the Employment-Assistance Program.

This brochure, which is available at all local employment centres (CLEs), contains general information on the various aspects of employment assistance, such as how to apply for assistance, special benefits, how to apply for a review of a decision, assistance for families, and employment-assistance measures.

Along with this brochure, several leaflets and mini-brochures covering more specific Employment-Assistance Program topics are also available at all CLEs.

Please note

This brochure is a general information document that cannot be used for legal interpretation purposes. It **does not replace** the provisions of the applicable acts and regulations. The information contained in this brochure was valid as of **May 2006**.

ISBN 2-550-76978-4
Legal deposit - Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2006

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ASSISTANCE UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT-ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

1

APPLYING FOR EMPLOYMENT-ASSISTANCE BENEFITS

Where do you apply?

The local employment centre (CLE) is where you should go to apply for employment-assistance benefits and to obtain the necessary information on the subject.

CLEs offer public employment services and social solidarity services, notably through the Employment-Assistance Program.

There are some 150 CLEs throughout Québec. To obtain the name and address of the CLE nearest you, contact the Bureau des renseignements et plaintes of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale at one of the numbers at the end of this brochure. You may also consult the Department's website at the following address: **www.mess.gouv.qc.ca**.

Are you eligible?

To be eligible for the Employment-Assistance Program, you must meet the eligibility criteria established by the *Act respecting income support, employment assistance and social solidarity* and the *Regulation respecting income support*:

- you must prove that your resources (money, property, earnings, benefits, and income) are equal to or less than the amounts prescribed by regulation

  and

- be a resident of Québec

  and

- be 18 or over

  or

  if you are under 18, you must be married or have been married, or you must be the parent of a dependent child

When you file your application for benefits, you may obtain information on specific situations and exceptional cases that also entitle you to assistance under the Employment-Assistance Program.

The benefit application process

Completing your application

To file an application for assistance under the Employment-Assistance Program, you must first complete the form entitled *Application for service*, which you can obtain at your CLE. This form is designed to provide all the information needed about who you are, where you live, your education, the jobs sought, and your work experience. Both adults in a family must each complete a form.

If you also want to receive financial assistance, you must complete the *Appendix 1 - Application for employment-assistance benefits* form. Only one form per family is needed for studying your application. You are required to provide full information about your family circumstances, liquid assets, property, income and debts.

Applicants who file for financial assistance because their state of health prevents them from working are referred to social solidarity services.

When completing the forms, make sure you provide **all the information requested**. Feel free to ask the CLE staff for help if you have problems completing your forms.

You must enclose all the documents required to evaluate your application when you file your duly completed and signed form, for example:

- your birth certificate and the birth certificate of each member of your family, and
- documents attesting to your liquid assets, the value of your property, and your income, such as
  - pay stubs
  - proof of cessation of employment
  - proof of residence (lease, deed of ownership, etc.)
  - municipal tax statements
  - bank books or monthly bank statements (updated to the date you file your application or as recently as possible)

You may be asked to provide other documents concerning your personal, family, or financial circumstances. Your CLE officer will let you know which documents are required, if any. If necessary, you will be allowed a certain period of time to complete your file.

Your signature on these documents is a solemn declaration.

Up-to-date bank statements

When you file an application for benefits under the Employment-Assistance Program or if you are already receiving benefits, it is important to have up-to-date bank statements, which should ideally be kept for twelve months. You will thus have an up-to-date statement if ever your CLE officer asks for it. In addition, you will avoid paying the fees required by the financial institution to provide a copy of a missing bank statement.

The interview

The interview comprises two stages. The first consists of an assessment during which the assistance officer:

- works with you to determine your labour market situation as regards the four following factors: your career choices; skills; job search; and job entry or retention
- assesses your ability to undertake the process of finding a job
- guides you towards a job search process if you are capable of working
- directs you to employment measures and services when you are capable of developing your employability but not of working
- assesses the admissibility of your application for financial assistance if you *completed the Appendix 1 - Application for employment-assistance benefits* form.

If you file an application for employment-assistance benefits that is deemed admissible, the assistance officer sets up an attribution interview to:

- assess your eligibility for financial assistance
- inform you about the obligations of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale toward you
- inform you about your rights and obligations with regard to your eligibility
- inform you about the services available and refer you, as needed, to various community resources (food banks, etc.)

The decision

Once the CLE officer has received all the documents and information required to determine your eligibility for the Employment-Assistance Program, you will receive by mail a **notice of decision** informing you whether or not you are eligible for employment-assistance benefits.

If you are eligible for employment-assistance benefits, the notice will specify the amount of assistance granted for the month following your application and the name of the officer assigned to your file. You will also be notified of any assistance that may be granted to you, according to applicable terms and conditions, for the month in which your application was filed. The notice will also indicate the reasons for the decision.

If you disagree with the decision, you may ask your officer to explain the reasons for the decision. You may also apply for a review within 90 days of receiving the notice of decision.

For more information on applying for a review of a decision, consult the leaflet *Reviewing a decision*, available at all CLEs.

THE AMOUNT OF THE BENEFIT

Benefit = difference between recognized needs and your resources

The financial assistance granted under the Employment-Assistance Program corresponds to the difference between the basic needs recognized by the Act and the Regulation and the resources at your disposal or that can be taken into account (money, property, income, etc.).

The assessment of your needs and resources also takes other factors into account, such as the composition of your family (independent adult or couple) and the parental contribution.

The regular monthly benefit is paid in advance for the current month and, unless there are exceptional circumstances, the amount is calculated based on your circumstances in the preceding month. For example, the monthly benefit paid on May 1 covers the month of May. However, if you receive additional earnings during the month of May, this income will be taken into account in calculating your monthly benefit for June.

Assessment of recognized needs

Recognized needs are those recognized under the Employment-Assistance Program as essential and for which a basic benefit is determined by regulation. This benefit may vary depending on whether you are an independent adult or part of a couple.

Additional financial assistance may be added to the basic benefit if, for example:

- you have a limited capacity for employment
- you are entitled to the Québec Sales Tax (QST) credit
- you have dependent children
- you are eligible for a special benefit under the Employment-Assistance Program due to a special situation
- you are eligible for a special benefit under the Employment-Assistance Program because you have a special need

Assessment of your resources

To determine whether you are eligible for the Employment-Assistance Program and to establish the amount of your benefit, the

Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale assesses all the resources at your disposal. Several types of resources are assessed: your cash resources (liquid assets), the value of your property, and your income, earnings, and benefits.

Furthermore, if you are an independent adult and the Department considers that you are entitled to financial assistance from your parents (parental contribution), it will take into account the income of one or both parents when assessing your eligibility for the Employment-Assistance Program and when determining the amount of your benefit.

When assessing your eligibility for the Employment-Assistance Program, the Department may decide to exempt a portion of your resources from the calculation of your benefit. Certain special situations may also be taken into consideration.

Your liquid assets

Your cash resources (or liquid assets) are the sums you have in hand or in a bank account and the assets that you can convert into cash in the short term, such as term deposits, savings bonds, and shares. These resources are taken into consideration when assessing your eligibility for the Employment-Assistance Program and when calculating the benefit you will be granted. If the value of your liquid assets exceeds the exemptions authorized by regulation, your application for financial assistance will be turned down or the amount granted may be reduced.

For more information on the assessment of your cash resources, consult the leaflet The *Employment-Assistance Program and liquid assets*, which is available at all CLEs.

The value of your property

The value of your property is taken into consideration when assessing your eligibility for the Employment-Assistance Program. Property includes, for example, any immovables (principal residence, cottage, land, etc.) and motor vehicles (car, snowmobile, etc.) that you may possess. Where their value exceeds the exemptions authorized by regulation for the type of property, the application for financial assistance may be turned down or the amount granted may be reduced.

In general, the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale assesses property based on its market value. However, real property is valued according to the standardized municipal assessment.

Your income

Your income is also taken into consideration when determining your eligibility for the Employment-Assistance Program and the amount of your benefit. This income may come from, for instance, employment earnings, support payments (see the explanations on page 40), a pension from the Régie des rentes du Québec (RRQ), or indemnities from the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST) or the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ).

However, if you receive employment-assistance allowances or support allowances from a third party and recognized by the Department, only a portion of this income will be taken into account when calculating the amount of your benefit. The remainder will be exempted from the calculation.

Presence of a spouse

If you live with a spouse, the resources of that person will be taken into account when determining the amount of your benefit. Under the Employment-Assistance Program, if you live with another person, the Department considers that you are part of a couple, as defined in the Act.

Parental contribution

When you apply for employment-assistance benefits, the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale determines whether you are supposed to receive a financial contribution from your parents to provide for your needs. This "parental contribution" applies in cases where applicants have not shown that they are independent of their parents.

The Department considers that a person has shown his or her independence if, for instance, that person has held a paid, full-time job for at least two years, is or has been married, has or has had a dependent child, or possesses a Bachelor's degree.

Financial assistance

Basic benefit

The basic benefit is financial assistance paid to an independent adult or a family to provide for some of their needs as prescribed by regulation under the Employment-Assistance Program.

The needs of children under 18 are generally covered by RRQ child assistance and the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) from the federal government.

Families with children of full age who are considered dependants of their parents receive additional assistance from the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale since the needs of these children are not covered by RRQ child assistance or the CCTB.

Limited capacity for employment allowances

There are three types of limited capacity for employment allowances: the temporarily limited capacity for employment allowance, the severely limited capacity for employment allowance, and the mixed allowance.

The temporarily limited capacity for employment allowance

This allowance is generally granted if, for example, you meet one of the following conditions:

- You have a medical certificate showing that, due to your physical or mental condition, you are unable, for a period of at least one month, to carry out activities as part of a job entry or job re-entry measure.
- You are at least 20 weeks pregnant. In this case, you must submit an application for this allowance along with a medical certificate from a doctor or a written attestation from a midwife.
- You care for a dependent child who was under 5 years old on the last September 30 or for a child aged 5 who does not attend school because there is no room in a full-time kindergarten.
- You care for a dependent child 5 years old or over who receives a Régie des rentes du Québec supplement for handicapped children.
- You are 55 or over and you file an application for this allowance.

- You provide constant care to a person whose autonomy is significantly reduced due to a physical or mental condition.
- You are an adult responsible for a family-type resource home (foster home or foster family) recognized under the *Act respecting health services and social services*.
- You are an adult responsible for a foster home under a service contract with the Ministère de la Sécurité publique and, as such, are responsible for a person required to live there.
- You are the victim of violence and are in a shelter for victims of conjugal violence.
- You have been placed in a foster home.
- An intermediary resource has assumed responsibility for you.

Severely limited capacity for employment allowance

This allowance will be granted if a medical certificate shows that your physical or mental condition is significantly affected permanently or indefinitely and that, for this reason and given your socio-occupational characteristics, you have a severely limited capacity for employment.

Mixed allowance

A couple may be eligible for the mixed allowance if one or both adults have a limited capacity for employment. For example, one of the adults in the couple may have a temporarily limited capacity for employment, while the other may have a severely limited capacity for employment.

A leaflet on the amounts of the benefits

For the amounts of the basic benefit and the limited capacity for employment allowances, please consult the *Adjustment of employment-assistance benefits for adults* leaflet, which is available at all CLEs.

Adjustments for dependent children

Adjustments for dependent children under 18

A family with dependent children under 18 that is receiving benefits generally receives the maximum amounts of RRQ child assistance and the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) from the federal government.

A family receiving benefits that does not receive these amounts can obtain, under the Employment-Assistance Program, an amount called an "adjustment." This amount offsets part of the difference between amounts of RRQ child assistance and the NCBS paid out and the amounts actually received with the maximum adjustment set out for the family.

Adjustments for dependent children of full age

The needs of dependent children of full age (18 or over) are not covered by RRQ child assistance or the NCBS. The Department thus grants additional financial assistance to eligible families to provide for the basic needs of these children if they are students.

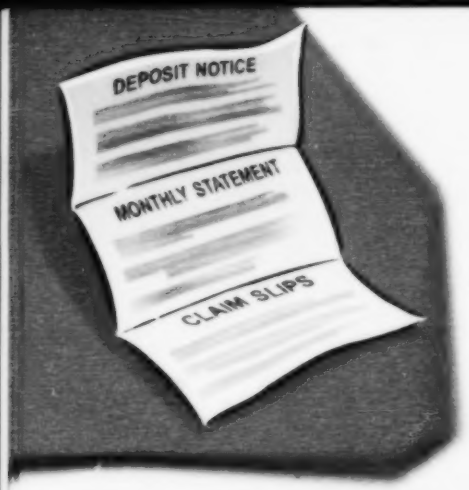
QST adjustment

In addition to the basic benefit, limited capacity for employment allowances, and adjustments for dependent children, you receive additional monthly financial assistance in the form of advance payments of the Québec Sales Tax (QST) credit from the Ministère du Revenu du Québec (MRQ).

Special benefits

Special benefits are amounts of financial assistance intended to cover certain special needs that are not taken into consideration in the basic benefit, the limited capacity for employment allowances or the adjustments. To take advantage of special benefits, you must first apply to the CLE and receive authorization before purchasing goods or services because these benefits are granted only under certain eligibility conditions.

Special benefits are intended specifically to meet health requirements or to help you deal with unforeseen events such as a fire, death, or disaster. For more information on special benefits, consult Section 2 "Special Benefits" of this brochure.



Family solidarity

The amount of the monthly benefit is reduced when an independent adult or an adult member of the family shares a dwelling with his or her father or mother. However, this reduction does not apply if, for example:

- the father or mother is also receiving employment-assistance benefits
- the independent adult or the adult member of the family has a severely limited capacity for employment
- the family is a single-parent famil
- the independent adult or the adult member of the family shows that the father or mother with whom he or she is cohabiting receives the maximum amount of the monthly guaranteed income supplement under the *Old Age Security Act*

"Conditional" assistance

In certain specific situations, temporary financial assistance, which must be repaid, may be granted under the Employment-Assistance Program to an adult or a family. Such assistance is granted, for instance, in cases where an adult or a family is entitled to a certain sum of money (e.g. from the CSST, the RRQ, the SAAQ, etc.), but has not yet received it. However, this assistance must be repaid to the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale as soon as the adult or the family has received the sum to which they are entitled.

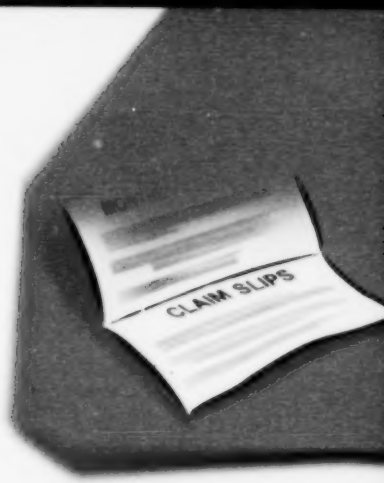
PAYMENT OF THE BENEFIT

Monthly direct deposit or cheque

The employment-assistance benefit is generally paid on the first day of each month. It is deposited directly into your bank account, upon request, or sent to you by mail. Direct deposit is advantageous in that you avoid the risk of your cheque being lost or stolen, or a delay in receiving your benefit.

If you wish to use the direct deposit system, you must complete the form provided for this purpose, which is available at all CLEs and your financial institution.

In addition to your cheque or notice of direct deposit, you will receive a monthly statement form and a claim slip (drug card).



For more information on the direct deposit option, consult the direct deposit leaflet, which is available at all CLEs.

Monthly statement

The monthly statement is a form on which you must indicate any change in your family, financial, or other circumstances. In general, you must complete this form and return it to your CLE as soon as a change occurs or no later than the 15th of each month.

This means that the Department can process the information in time to adjust the amount of your next monthly benefit to reflect your new circumstances. This will prevent you, for instance, from having to repay an amount that you may receive but to which you are not entitled. If a change in your circumstances occurs after you send in your monthly statement, you must inform your CLE by phone or in person.

However, if you or your spouse has a severely limited capacity for employment, you do not have to return this form unless there is a change to declare.

If you are an independent adult or the head of a single-parent family, and have no severely limited capacity for employment, you can phone in your monthly statement. For more information, see the *The monthly statement by phone* pamphlet available at all CLEs.

Claim slip

The claim slip, also called the "drug card," is a document that enables you to obtain certain drugs prescribed by a doctor, for which you must pay a deductible and a co-insurance charge (recipients with a severely limited capacity for employment can receive these drugs free of charge). The claim slip also entitles you to certain services, such as eye tests and dental care.

You are given a claim slip when you are admitted to the Employment-Assistance Program. Under certain circumstances, claim slips may also be given in the case of an adult who finds a job or who participates in an active Emploi-Québec measure, or in the case of an adult or a family even if the adult or family does not receive employment-assistance benefits from the Department but has high drug-related costs.

SPECIAL BENEFITS

2

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL BENEFITS

What is a special benefit?

A special benefit is an amount paid to help cover expenses incurred due to a special need (e.g., eyeglasses), or specific circumstances (e.g., damage caused by fire), which are provided for in the *Regulation respecting income support*. There are several special benefits.

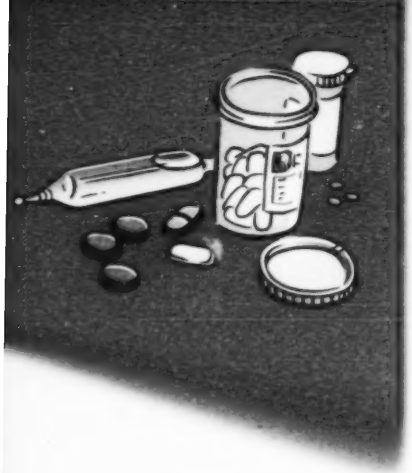
In certain cases, you will have to pay the cost of the good or service yourself, and the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale will reimburse you directly. In other situations, the Department or the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ) will pay the supplier of the good or service, and you will have nothing to pay as long as the expenses incurred do not exceed the amounts stipulated in the Regulation.

How can you obtain a special benefit?

Before purchasing goods or paying for services

- First check with your CLE officer to find out whether the good or service is covered by a special benefit provided for in the Regulation and whether written authorization is required.

- Check to find out whether the costs incurred for the good or service are reimbursed in full or in part.
- Check to find out whether the special benefit is paid directly to you or to the supplier of the good or service in question. In certain cases, payment of the good or service is made directly to the supplier (e.g. dental care is paid directly to the dentist by the RAMQ).



Conditions to be met

Provide the required documents

When applying for a special benefit, you must provide the documents required for the assessment of your application. These may include a prescription from a health professional, a medical certificate, or a cost estimate for a good or service. You must also provide proof of purchase of the good or service in order to be reimbursed.

Obtain authorization from your CLE

Except for certain specific situations, you need authorization from your CLE officer before you can purchase a good or pay for a service and receive the special benefit covering it.

Are costs reimbursed in full?

In general, the special benefit covers the amount paid for the good or service. However, it may not exceed the reimbursable amounts stipulated in the *Regulation respecting income support*.

For example, if the cost of a given good or service is $75 and the reimbursable amount stipulated in the Regulation is $50, you will receive a special benefit of $50 to cover your purchase, and you must pay the difference.

NEEDS COVERED BY SPECIAL BENEFITS

Here are the main goods and services covered by special benefits. To find out whether a need, good, or service not listed in this brochure is covered by the special benefits, please contact your CLE officer.

Prescription drugs

Under the drug insurance plan administered by the RAMQ, you must pay a maximum of **$16.66 per month** to cover the cost of your prescription drugs. RAMQ pays the remainder directly to your pharmacist.

To make use of this special benefit, show your pharmacist your health insurance card or the claim slip that you receive each month.

However, if you receive a severely limited capacity for employment allowance, your prescription drugs will be free of charge.

Dental care

To receive free dental care, including repairs to a dental prosthesis, you must:

- have received employment-assistance benefits for at least twelve consecutive months;
- present your claim slip on which "YES" is marked in the "Dental care covered" box. If "YES" is not marked, the date on which you are entitled to begin receiving free dental care will be indicated on the slip.

RAMQ pays dental care costs directly to the dentist.

Dental prostheses

To receive dental prostheses free of charge, you must:

- have been an employment-assistance recipient for at least 24 consecutive months;
- have your CLE officer complete the form authorizing the purchase or replacement of the dental prosthesis.

RAMQ pays the costs incurred for dental prostheses directly to the dentist or denturologist according to the rates in effect.

Eye test

To be eligible for this special benefit, you must have been an employment-assistance recipient for at least twelve consecutive months.

To obtain these services free of charge, you must present your claim slip on which "YES" is marked in the "Eye test" box. If "YES" is not marked, the date on which you are entitled to begin receiving this service free of charge will be indicated on the slip.

RAMQ pays the costs incurred for an eye test directly to the optometrist or ophthalmologist. The Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale may pay for a complete eye test once every two years.

Eyeglasses and contact lenses

The costs incurred for the purchase or replacement of eyeglasses or contact lenses are paid according to the rates stipulated in the *Regulation respecting income support*. However, to be eligible for this special benefit, you must have been an employment-assistance recipient for at least six consecutive months.

Before purchasing eyeglasses or contact lenses, you must have your CLE officer complete the form entitling you to do so and authorizing payment according to the prescribed conditions. The Department pays the costs incurred for eyeglasses or contact lenses directly to the optometrist or optician up to the amounts stipulated in the Regulation.

If the total cost of the eyeglasses or contact lenses exceeds the amounts stipulated in the Regulation, you must pay the difference.

Pregnancy

If you are pregnant, you may be eligible for a special monthly benefit in addition to your basic benefit. This benefit is designed to meet your special dietary needs during pregnancy. It is paid each month until you deliver. It may also be paid to an employment-assistance recipient who has a pregnant, dependent daughter.

To obtain this benefit, you must provide a written attestation to your CLE officer signed by a doctor or a midwife confirming that you are pregnant and indicating the expected date of delivery.

Nursing

If you are the mother of an infant under one year of age, you are eligible for a special nursing benefit designed to meet specific dietary needs during the time you are breast-feeding.

To obtain this benefit, you must provide your CLE officer with a written statement signed by you confirming that you are breast-feeding and specifying the estimated length of time you will be breast-feeding. As warranted, a second such statement is required when your baby is six months old. The special benefit is paid every month for the fixed length of time, but not beyond the month when your baby becomes one year old.

Purchase of infant formula

If you prefer to feed your baby an infant formula or if you stop breast-feeding, the Department may grant a special benefit to help you pay for part of the cost of the formula. You can thus purchase a certain quantity of infant formula at a reduced cost in a pharmacy by presenting your claim slip.

However, you must purchase the infant formula **exclusively** in pharmacies. RAMQ pays the difference in the cost incurred for the purchase of infant formula directly to the pharmacist. The purchase of infant formula is authorized automatically for infants aged 0 to 8 months and, as needed, for babies aged 9 to 12 months. In the latter case, a medical certificate is required.

This means that you must inform your CLE officer as to whether you choose to breast-feed your baby or give your baby infant formula if you are to receive the appropriate special benefit.

If you opt for infant formula, an authorization number will appear opposite the baby's name on your claim slip. You must show this slip to your pharmacist each time you purchase formula. The quantities you are allowed to purchase without paying the actual price are limited, but sufficient to meet your baby's needs.

For more information

A leaflet entitled *Three special benefits to give your baby a healthy start* is available at all CLEs.

Ortheses, prostheses, and health and safety equipment, and accessories

You may have to purchase or lease prostheses, ortheses, equipment (e.g., hospital bed, bathtub grip bars) or accessories (e.g., incontinence briefs) because of your state of health.

However, before purchasing or renting this equipment or these accessories, ask your CLE officer whether you are eligible for a special benefit to help pay for these products. A medical certificate from a doctor confirming your need is required.

Transportation and accommodation costs for medical care

Transportation and accommodation costs incurred to receive medical care may be reimbursed or paid directly to the service supplier (e.g., ambulance service). However, you must use the least expensive means of transportation possible under the circumstances.

Since transportation services differ among regions, you should ask your CLE officer about the costs and means of transportation that are authorized in your region and how to have the costs reimbursed. A certificate from a doctor, dentist, or midwife, confirming your need, is required.

Special health needs

If your physical condition requires special care for which you regularly incur costs, other amounts may be added to your monthly benefit to help you pay for these additional expenses.

You may be entitled to this special benefit if, for instance, you are diabetic, have undergone an ileostomy, a urostomy, or a temporary colostomy, or use oxygen for medical purposes. A medical certificate from a doctor confirming your need is required.

School expenses

There is a special benefit to help cover your children's back-to-school expenses. This special benefit is paid for each eligible child once a year, in August. The amount differs depending on whether your child attends kindergarten, elementary school, or secondary school in a general education program.

This assistance is issued automatically for every child aged 5 who attends kindergarten, every child aged 6 to 11 who attends elementary school, and every child aged 12 to 16 who attends secondary school in a general education program.

You must inform your CLE if your child begins kindergarten before age 5 or secondary school before age 12, or if your child is 12 years old and still attends elementary school in a general education program.

For children aged 16 and over, proof of school attendance must be provided to your CLE officer sometime in September.

Funeral expenses

You may be eligible for a special benefit, under certain conditions, to pay for a portion of funeral expenses. This special benefit may also be granted to a person who is not receiving employment-assistance benefits but who meets the conditions for receiving the special benefit.

Exceptional situations

Other special benefits may be paid to help you cover costs incurred due to difficult situations. This is the case, for instance, for situations involving a fire, a disaster, a move for health or hygiene reasons, the need to be sheltered in a home for victims of violence, or following a separation.

In all cases, it is preferable to talk to your CLE officer before paying the expenses incurred due to this kind of exceptional situation.

RIGHTS, OBLIGATIONS, INFORMATION, AND COMPLAINTS

3

THE DEPARTMENT'S OBLIGATIONS

Under the Employment-Assistance Program, the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale has certain obligations toward you. The *Act respecting income support, employment assistance and social solidarity* stipulates that the Department must:

- provide you with assistance, if necessary, to help you understand and, where applicable, access the Employment-Assistance Program. It must, for instance, assist you in applying for a benefit;
- study your application promptly and make a decision as soon as possible;
- provide you with assistance, if necessary, to apply for a review, give you the opportunity to comment and make observations, and help you produce documents to complete your file;
- inform you as completely as possible of your rights and obligations under the Act and of the measures, programs, and services available;
- inform you of the existence of Régie des rentes du Québec (RRQ) child assistance, the Government of Canada's National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS), the Shelter Allowance Program administered by the Ministère du Revenu du Québec (MRQ), the specific services the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ) offers persons who are eligible for last-resort financial assistance programs and, where applicable, how to access them;

- give you ten days' written notice before reducing a benefit or ceasing payment because you failed to declare your real circumstances. The notice must also explain the reasons for the decision. Before this ten-day period expires, you may submit your comments and, where applicable, produce documents to complete your file.

Moreover, regarding these obligations, the Department's Bureau des renseignements et plaintes has certain special obligations. It must:

- inform you of your rights and obligations
- foster the quality of services provided under the Act for persons targeted by employment-assistance measures, programs, or services and for persons receiving financial assistance
- monitor these persons' degree of satisfaction with the measures, programs or services provided for under the Act
- make recommendations to the appropriate authorities to remedy or prevent the recurrence of prejudicial situations and prevent the occurrence of similar situations
- take into account the opinions and observations of anyone who has used the measures, programs, or services provided for under the Act

THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF RECIPIENTS

The Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale recognizes that employment-assistance recipients and persons who apply for assistance under the Employment-Assistance Program have certain rights stemming from its obligation to provide them with services. In addition to these rights, you have a number of obligations.

Your rights

The Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale recognizes your right, as an employment-assistant recipient or applicant:

- to apply for a review of a decision
- to appeal to the Tribunal administrative du Québec (TAQ) if you are dissatisfied with the review of a decision
- to receive complete, easy-to-understand information
- to consult your file
- to be guided in the process by the person of your choice

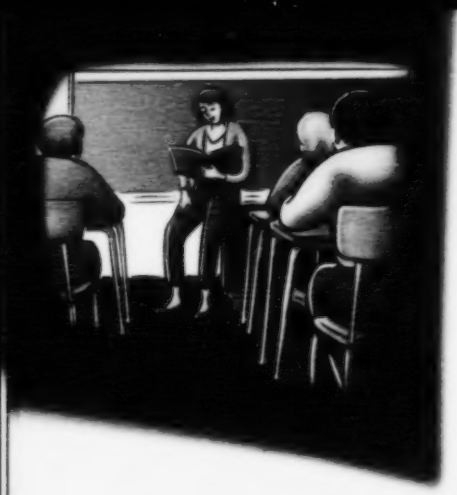
- to have the information in your file treated with confidentiality

Your obligations

Employment-assistance recipients also have certain obligations. Should you fail to comply with your obligations, your application may be turned down, your benefit may be reduced or cancelled, or certain administrative measures may be taken. As such, you must:

- file a written *Application for employment-assistance benefits* using the form available for this purpose
- provide all the information and documents required to determine your eligibility for the Employment-Assistance Program and, where applicable, that of your family
- exercise your rights and use the benefits available under other legislation, e.g. those that may be obtained through the Régie des rentes du Québec, the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec, the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail, support payments, etc.
- inform the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale as soon as possible of any change in your family, financial, or other circumstances that could modify your benefit, by completing and returning the monthly statement form provided for this purpose
- when the situation so requires, provide a medical report on the form provided by the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale and, as warranted, undergo another medical check-up
- produce a full statement when the Department considers it necessary (not more than once every 12 months)
- repay any amount claimed from you under the terms and conditions stipulated in the Regulation
- not relinquish a right or dispose of property or money (liquid asset) without due consideration

If you have no severely limited capacity for employment, we will encourage you to take the steps that are right for you to find a job.



REQUESTING INFORMATION

The main source of information on the programs and services offered by the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale is the **Bureau des renseignements et plaintes**.

The Bureau provides, in both French and English, general and specific information on the *Act respecting income support, employment assistance and social solidarity*, the *Regulation respecting income support*, and the various programs offered by the Department (e.g., the Employment-Assistance Program). It also provides information on the programs, measures, and public employment services offered by Emploi-Québec.

Bureau staff will inform you of your rights, obligations, and recourses, and direct you to the appropriate government or community resource, as warranted. They can also provide you with explanations of your file and assist you in making your requests.

You can speak with an information officer between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, and between 10:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday. At all times, you can use the interactive voice messaging system, which provides information on programs and other measures, as well as the address of your CLE.

The Bureau also processes information requests and complaints received by regular or electronic mail.

It also receives comments from the public and forwards them to the appropriate departmental authorities.

APPLYING FOR A REVIEW OF A DECISION

If you do not agree with a notice of decision from your CLE, your officer can provide you with an explanation to help you understand the reasons for the decision.

If you are still not satisfied, you may, in cases provided for under the Act, apply in writing for a review within 90 days of the date you receive the notice of decision from the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Complete the *Application for review form*, available at all CLEs or your regional review office, and forward it to your CLE, where it will undergo preliminary processing.

If your CLE upholds the decision, your application will be forwarded to the review service of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, which will examine your application and hand down another decision. If you are contesting a decision concerning a limited capacity for employment, your application for review will be processed by the Service de l'évaluation médicale et socio-professionnelle of the Department.

If you do not agree with the review decision, you may file an appeal with the Tribunal administratif du Québec (TAQ) within 60 days of the date you receive the notice of decision. Forms for this purpose are available at TAQ offices and registries of the Small Claims Division of the Court of Québec. TAQ decisions are final. However, if your application for review was judged inadmissible because it was not filed within the 90-day deadline, you may file an appeal with TAQ within 15 days of the date you receive the notice of decision.

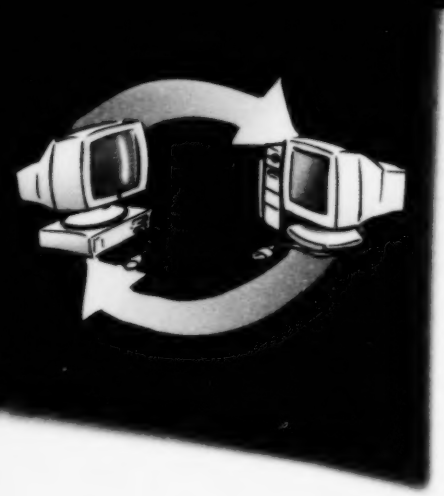
Decisions made within the framework of the measures and public employment services offered by Emploi-Québec are not subject to review, except for claim notices for the repayment of amounts unduly received. However, if you feel that any other decision handed down concerning the measures and public employment services offered by Emploi-Québec is unfounded, you may apply for an administrative review of that decision.

Since January 1, 2006, you can request review of a decision handed down further to a claim for amounts to which you were not entitled under specific programs such as the Support program for workers affected by mass layoffs in the resource regions or Support for pregnant minors. Your CLE or the Department's Bureau des renseignements et plaintes can give you complete information on the programs for which you can apply for a review.

For more information on applying a review of a decision, consult the leaflet *Reviewing a decision*, available at all CLEs.

FILING A COMPLAINT

If you are not satisfied with the services provided by the staff of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, you may file a complaint in person, in writing, by telephone, or by email with the administrative services of your CLE or the Bureau des renseignements et plaintes of the Department and, where applicable, have the appropriate corrective measures taken. All complaints are checked and analyzed in depth.



Complaint processing is strictly confidential, since the Department is subject to the *Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information*.

In all cases, the Bureau des renseignements et plaintes contacts your CLE to ensure that the complaint is dealt with appropriately. No more than 48 hours after your complaint has been received, you will be contacted and given an opportunity to express your viewpoint and explain the reasons for your complaint.

This contact also allows you to obtain information on the decisions regarding your file and the actions required to process your complaint.

Persons who file a complaint, or their representative, are personally informed of the results of the analysis, their rights and obligations and, where applicable, the recourse that may be taken.

In exercising its responsibilities, the Bureau des renseignements et plaintes does not replace the review service or the established decision review process.

INFORMATION EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES IN MANAGING THE EMPLOYMENT-ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

For program management and financial assistance purposes, the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale can enter into information exchange agreements with other government departments and agencies and private sector organizations.

These agreements are entered into in compliance with the *Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information* and submitted to the Commission d'accès à l'information du Québec for its opinion.

Under these agreements and in keeping with Commission d'accès à l'information opinions, the Department can request information on your income, property, vehicles, immovables, credit file, and sums of money paid to you by other government departments and agencies.

The Department's process of obtaining information is part of its routine checks and monitoring and does not free you from the

obligation to provide all the information and documents needed to study your eligibility for the Employment-Assistance Program.

As at March 2006, the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale had signed information exchange agreements with the following departments or agencies:

- Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS)
- Ministère de la Justice
- Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles (MICC)
- Ministère de la Sécurité publique
- Ministry of Community and Social Services of Ontario
- Department of Human Resources and Skills Development
- Ministère des Affaires municipales et des Régions (MAMR)
- Revenu Québec
- Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST)
- Directeur de l'état civil
- Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ)
- Régie des rentes du Québec (RRQ)
- Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ)
- Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)
- Correctionnel Service Canada
- Cree Hunters and Trappers Income Security Board

THE REPAYMENT OF AN AMOUNT UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT-ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

4

REPAYMENT OF AN AMOUNT: A QUESTION OF FAIRNESS

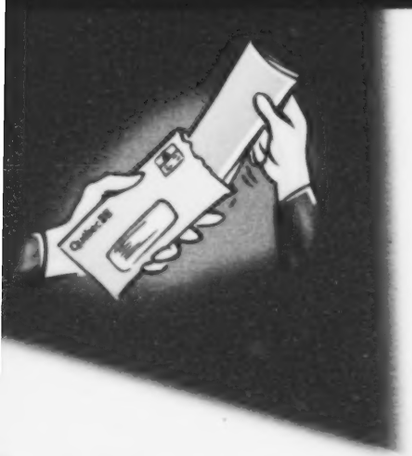
The Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale must ensure that the financial assistance paid out under the Employment-Assistance Program goes to the right individuals and families, and that this assistance reflects their real circumstances. The activities carried out for this purpose ensure the sound management of public funds and fair treatment for all.

HOW TO AVOID HAVING TO REPAY AN AMOUNT

Employment-assistance benefits are based on the information you give the Department on your financial, family, or other circumstances.

To avoid receiving a claim, we suggest that you provide all the information and documents needed to determine whether you are eligible for the Employment-Assistance Program and, as soon as possible, provide complete, accurate information in your monthly statement and full statement, when the Department deems it necessary. If you foresee any change in your financial, family, or other circumstances, you must notify your CLE **BEFORE** making a decision likely to have an impact on the financial assistance you receive.

For more information on *how to avoid having to repay an amount,* consult the leaflet How to avoid having to repay an amount, which is available at all CLEs.



REPAYMENT OF A DEBT

If you have an amount to repay under the Employment-Assistance Program, you will first receive a notice of claim from the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale. After sending you the notice of claim, the Department will send you a recovery certificate indicating the amount to be repaid. You will receive this certificate when the deadline for contesting the decision has expired if you do not seek recourse or, if you have exercised your right to recourse, when the decision handed down confirms the claim. The claim certificate gives the Department the authority to use various ways of recovering overpayments.

Ways of repaying or recovering an amount

The amounts claimed back may be repaid by:

- full and immediate repayment;

  or

- monthly deductions from financial assistance granted according to the amounts prescribed by regulation;

  or

- monthly installments written into an agreement reached with the claims officer, for people who do not receive financial assistance from the Department. These installments may not be less than the amount withheld from the assistance being paid.

The Department may also use the following means to recover amounts owed to it by:

- withholding amounts from income tax and Québec Sales Tax refunds;
- taking legal action such as garnishment of wages, seizure of liquid assets, or seizure of property.

Charges arising from a claim

In addition to claim amounts, you may have to pay interest, administrative fees or legal fees.

For more information on repaying an amount under the Employment-Assistance Program, consult the leaflet *Repayment of a debt*, which is available at all CLEs.

SOLIDARY LIABILITY

Barring certain exceptions, under the Employment-Assistance Program, spouses share solidary liability for repaying claims. The total amount is claimed back from both adults, whether the recipient was receiving benefits as an independent adult or a family. Both persons, whether they continue to live together as a couple or not, are liable for the claim until it has been repaid in full.

When a claim is issued on the grounds that a couple failed to declare they were cohabiting as spouses, the spouse who was not receiving benefits is also liable for repaying the claim.

However, individuals who can prove that they were unaware of their spouse's actions that led the Department to issue a claim are not liable for repaying the claim.

Similarly, individuals who can prove that it was impossible for them to declare their true circumstances because they feared violent retribution from their spouse for themselves or a dependent child are not liable for the repayment of the claim. The person may ask to be exempted from the obligation to repay the amount to their CLE. These applications are treated confidentially and exclude the violent spouse.

Solidary liability does not apply when an adult of the family was waiting to exercise a right. The excess assistance paid is claimed back only from the adult who exercises a right (e.g., a CSST indemnity).

MISREPRESENTATION

When the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale claims back an amount, it determines whether misrepresentation has occurred. Misrepresentation exists when persons deliberately fail to file a statement or transmit false or incomplete information or documents in order to obtain benefits to which they are not entitled (e.g., a person fails to indicate on his or her monthly statement that he or she has begun to work).

Misrepresentation has serious consequences and results in severe recovery measures such as the addition of monthly interest charges until the entire amount is repaid and the withholding of an amount from the monthly benefit. In addition, if the incident recurs, the amount withheld from the employment-assistance benefit doubles.

EMPLOYMENT-ASSISTANCE AND FAMILIES

5

SPOUSES, FAMILIES, AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Spouses

Under the Employment-Assistance Program, the term "spouses" means:

- two persons who are joined by marriage or civil union or who cohabit

  or

- persons, of the opposite or the same sex, who cohabit and who are the parents of the same child

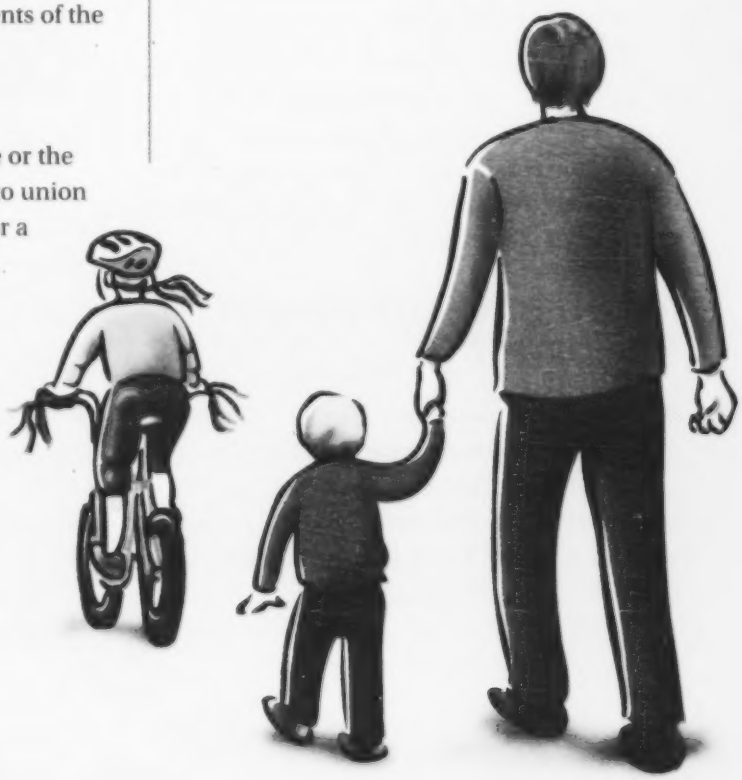
  or

- persons of full age, of the opposite or the same sex, who cohabit in a de facto union and, at any one time, cohabited for a period of at least one year

Families

Under the Employment-Assistance Program, the term "family" means:

- an adult with one or more dependent children
- spouses with one or more dependent children or with one or more dependent children of either spouse, or
- spouses, if they have no dependent children



Dependent children

Under the Employment-Assistance Program, children are considered dependents of their father, their mother, or another adult designated by regulation if they are dependent on one of these persons for their subsistence and they:

- are under 18, are not married, and have no dependent children, or
- are 18 or over, attend an education institution, are neither married nor the spouse of another person, and are not the parents of a child who is their dependent

In some cases, spouses or children continue to be part of a family for the purposes of calculating employment-assistance benefits despite their absence (e.g. due to death, a jail sentence, or placement in a shelter).

IF YOU HAVE DEPENDENT CHILDREN

In principle, the needs of dependent children under 18 are met through RRQ child assistance or the federal government Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB). The CCTB has two components, the Child Tax Benefit and the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS).

Since the needs of dependent children over 18 are not covered by RRQ child assistance or the CCTB, the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale grants additional financial assistance called "adjustments" to families with dependent children over 18 to cover the needs of these adult children.

If you no longer live with the mother or father of your dependent children, you must file for child support from the other parent or reach a mutual agreement on support that complies with the standards of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale. In addition, if custody is shared, the adjustments are paid in proportion to custody time if it is less than 20%.

Children under 18

RRQ Child assistance and NCBS adjustments

Families that are granted employment-assistance benefits generally receive the maximum amounts of RRQ child assistance and NCBS to cover the basic needs of their dependent children under 18.

However, in some cases, these families may not receive the maximum amounts. In order to benefit from all the financial assistance required to cover their children's needs,

these families receive, in addition to last-resort financial assistance, an extra amount called an "adjustment" that offsets part of the difference between the adjustment amount prescribed by regulation and the Child Assistance amount, and the NCBS amount they actually receive, if these amounts are less than the adjustment amount.

Other kinds of financial assistance for children under 18

In certain situations, additional financial assistance may be granted to families with children under 18. This is the case, for instance, when the children live with their parents and attend secondary school in a vocational training program or are enrolled in postsecondary studies.

Universal Child Care Benefit

Since July 1, 2006, the federal government has granted families a benefit of $100 a month for every child under 6 years old.

The Government of Québec excludes this benefit in calculating your employment-assistance benefit. This means your benefit is not decreased.

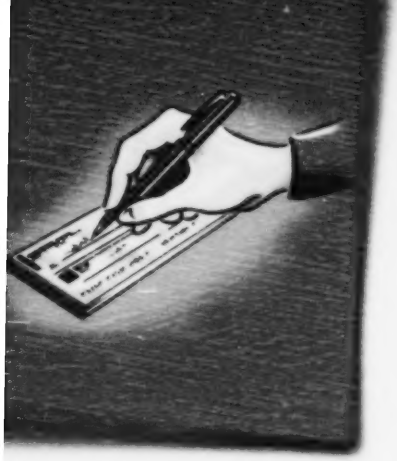
In addition, you are not obliged to declare this amount in your monthly statement.

Children 18 or over

Families that receive employment-assistance benefits and that include a dependent child aged 18 or over are entitled to an adjustment to their benefits if the child attends school. Assistance varies according to the level of schooling (secondary school, college, or university). Additional financial assistance may also be granted:

- to single-parent families
- when the child lives with his or her parents and attends secondary school in a vocational training program or is enrolled in postsecondary studies
- when the child has a disability and attends secondary school in a general education program

In addition, a child aged 18 or over who has a severely limited capacity for employment may be eligible for employment-assistance benefits as an independent adult.



IF YOU RECEIVE CHILD SUPPORT

If you apply for employment-assistance benefits, child support amounts and benefits are subtracted from the employment-assistance benefit granted.

However, if you have at least one dependent child, the first $100 of your monthly child support payment will not be considered in calculating the benefit.

If you are not receiving the child support to which you are entitled

If you are an employment-assistance recipient and are not receiving the child support granted to you and your dependent children by a court of law, the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale can intervene on your behalf directly with the Ministère du Revenu du Québec, which will use the means at its disposal to recover the child support from the debtor. This is known as subrogation.

If your child support is cancelled or reduced retroactively

If your child support is cancelled or reduced retroactively, you may be entitled to an adjustment to your employment-assistance benefit if you apply for it and provide the amended judgment in the 90 days after the judgment is delivered. The benefit amount may be reassessed if your benefit was reduced, refused or cancelled due to inclusion of your child support for benefit calculation purposes.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR FAMILIES

Special benefits are amounts of financial assistance used to meet special needs (e.g. transportation for medical reasons, pregnancy, school expenses), the costs of which are not included in the basic benefit. You must apply for these special benefits because they are granted only under certain conditions. For more information on special benefits, consult Section 2 "Special Benefits."

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SPOUSES

The addition of a spouse

If you decide to share your life with a spouse, you must notify your CLE officer of this change in your circumstances as soon as possible. You must also send your CLE officer all the documents regarding the circumstances of this person, notably his or her liquid assets, the value of his or her property, and his or her income, as warranted.

Separation

When a couple separates, financial assistance changes. The new benefit takes into account the different needs of each adult. This is why it is very important that you inform your CLE officer of any changes in your family circumstances as soon as possible.

If you are receiving child assistance from the RRQ or the NCBS from the Canada Revenue Agency, you must notify both these agencies of your separation.

In the event one of the spouses dies, is placed in a shelter, or receives a jail sentence, the Department must also be informed.

THE EMPLOYMENT-ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

6

SOLIDARITÉ JEUNESSE: AN ALTERNATIVE TO EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

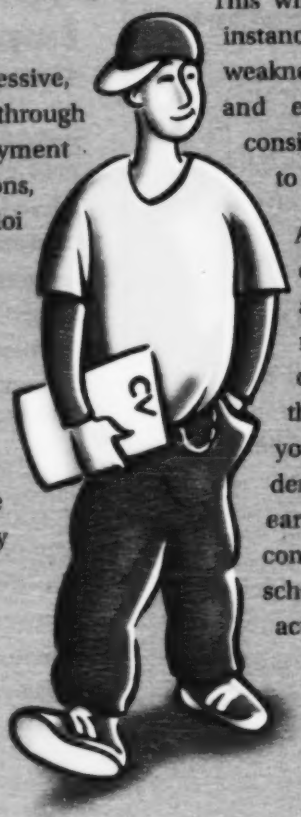
If you are aged 18 to 24 and apply for financial assistance under the Employment-Assistance Program, Solidarité jeunesse can provide you with an alternative.

Solidarité jeunesse is an initiative of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale that gives you the opportunity to think about your goals and obtain the guidance you need to devise an action plan leading to financial independence and ways of achieving it.

Solidarité jeunesse is a progressive, personalized process made possible through the support of your local employment centre (CLE) and youth organizations, including carrefours jeunesse-emploi (CJEs).

Who can take part?

Solidarité jeunesse is for all young people under 25 who are able to work, or who have temporary job constraints because they have dependent children, and who apply for and are eligible for employment-assistance benefits. Participation is voluntary.



A personalized action plan

After being referred to a CJE or other youth organization by your CLE officer, you will first take part in activities that help you find ways of achieving or regaining your independence. In general, this intensive period lasts about three months.

This will be an opportunity for you, for instance, to analyze your strengths and weaknesses, take stock of your educational and employment achievements, and consider the kind of job that is accessible to you.

After this period of analysis and orientation, you will draw up an action plan with the help of the resource person at the youth organization. The goal of this plan in the short term is for you to regain your personal and social independence and, eventually, to be able to earn a living. To do this, you can consider options such as returning to school, taking part in a job integration activity, or getting a job.

Support for one year

When you opt for Solidarité jeunesse, you enjoy support, coaching, and follow-up from a youth organization for a full year.

Throughout that year, a local follow-up committee formed of CLE and CJE or other youth organization staff makes sure your action plan is on track.

Financial assistance

In exchange for your participation in Solidarité jeunesse, in addition to a participation allowance, you will receive the same amount you would have received as an employment-assistance recipient.

For more information

For more information on Solidarité jeunesse, consult the documents available, for instance, at CLEs, CJEs, other youth organizations, and Services Québec.

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR EMPLOYMENT-ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS

When you are admitted to the Employment-Assistance Program, are able to work and are prepared to undertake a job entry or re-entry process, your officer can refer you to the public employment services for which Emploi-Québec is responsible.

There, you will meet with an employment-assistance officer who works with you to determine the measures, services, or other activities that meet your needs. Next, the officer will draw up an action plan to be carried out as part of an Individualized Integration, Training and Employment Plan.

Employment-assistance services

If you are ready to enter or re-enter the labour market directly, the public employment services offered by Emploi-Québec include labour market and placement information, either self-serve or with assistance, as well as reception and employability assessment services. These services are also available to all Quebecers, without regard to their circumstances. In other words, they are universal services.

However, if you face particular challenges in entering the labour market or need specific training for a job, public employment services can offer you, for example, specialized career counselling services, skills-development activities, training, and individualized job-search assistance. These services are offered

within the framework of employment-assistance activities and measures that may be intensive.

Employment-assistance measures

The various measures offered by Emploi-Québec public employment services can help you find a job or acquire skills are based on the following four themes:

- Job readiness
- Job integration
- Job creation
- Job stabilization and maintenance

For more detailed information on the measures offered by the public employment services for which Emploi-Québec is responsible, consult the documents available at all CLEs.

The Individualized Integration, Training and Employment Plan

Any employment-assistance recipient who is committed to finding a job can participate in an individualized integration, training, and employment plan tailored specifically to his or her needs and aptitudes. The recipient helps draw up and implement the individualized action plan that lays out his or her needs and aptitudes, and the concrete actions intended to achieve his or her employment objectives. This is the individualized integration, training, and employment plan.

During the design of your plan, an officer for the public employment services offered by Emploi-Québec will analyze your situation and help you determine ways to help you find work that are adapted both to your situation and your personal profile. This means you can gain new work experience, think about going back to school, or sign up for extra training. You can also focus on finding a job. Whatever you decide to do as part of this plan, you will receive follow-up adapted to your needs.

Income support

Income support includes the employment-assistance allowance and the reimbursement of additional expenses related to participating in an employment-assistance measure or beginning a job. Payment of the employment-assistance allowance and the reimbursement of any additional expenses may be regular, i.e., every 14 days, or as a single instalment, depending on your needs.

Employment-assistance allowance

If you receive employment-assistance benefits and participate in an employment-assistance measure entitling you to assistance, you will receive additional financial assistance called an "employment-assistance allowance" and, if necessary, assistance to cover any additional expenses directly related to your participation in the measure.

The amount of the employment-assistance allowance depends on the active measure and your status, and is calculated by taking into account the employment-assistance benefits you receive.

The reimbursement of additional expenses related to participating in an employment-assistance measure and beginning a job.

People taking part in an Emploi-Québec measure may also be reimbursed for certain additional expenses (e.g., transportation, childcare) directly related to their participation. Under certain conditions, Emploi-Québec may also pay financial assistance to compensate for expenditures related to beginning a job.

For more information on public employment services

For more information on the various kinds of public employment services under the responsibility of Emploi-Québec, consult the documents available at CLEs, among other places.

PLACE À L'EMPLOI

If you have been an employment-assistance recipient for fewer than two years or if you are under 30 and are able to work, you will be referred to Place à l'emploi. This strategy is aimed at providing quick, intensive assistance as you strive to enter the labour market.

Your officer will encourage you to undertake or continue job-search efforts based on your needs and will refer you to the employment-assistance services offered by Emploi-Québec, which are available to you at all times.

Place à l'emploi is also for people who are able to work and who apply for employment-assistance benefits. When they file their application, an Emploi-Québec employee will meet with them as soon as possible to recommend, as needed, alternatives to employment-assistance benefits.

Structured support and individualized follow-up

The meeting with the officer for the employment-assistance services offered by Emploi-Québec will give you the opportunity to determine what your skills are and what action is needed to optimize your chances of

finding a job. The officer will meet with you on a regular basis to evaluate the results of your job-search efforts

This evaluation will help pinpoint any problem areas and assess your needs in order to determine whether you require more specialized services to carry out the activities you and your officer decided were best for you.

For more information on Place à l'emploi, consult the appropriate documents available at all CLEs.

MA PLACE AU SOLEIL

If you are a young mother who is receiving employment-assistance benefits[1], have not completed secondary school and would like to return to school in order to find a job, Ma place au soleil may help you reach your goal.

With Ma place au soleil, you will have the opportunity to complete your secondary school studies and obtain a diploma of vocational or technical training in a trade that meets your aspirations and that offers good employment prospects.

Training generally begins at the adult education level where participants can study at their own pace to obtain a secondary school diploma or where they can take prerequisite courses for a vocational or technical training program.

Parents of pre-school children must have access to childcare if they are to take steps to find a job. The Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale can, in collaboration with childcare centres, among others, help you find a childcare facility in your community. Childcare expenses, like the cost of transportation, registration, and school material, may be reimbursed according to the terms and conditions stipulated in the policies and programs of the employment-assistance services offered by Emploi-Québec.

The Department can count on the collaboration of a number of partners in implementing Ma place au soleil, including adult education centres, school boards, CLSCs, childcare centres, and community organizations. These partners work together to help you succeed in your training and job-search efforts.

For more information on Ma place au soleil or to find the participating CLE in your area, call one of the numbers on the back of this brochure.

1. Priority is given to single-parents

APPENDIX
SOME TERMS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Act respecting income support, employment assistance and social solidarity

This Act, which came into force on October 1, 1999, sets out the action framework and the main components of the Employment-Assistance Program.

Active employment-assistance measures

The set of structured initiatives under the employment-assistance services offered by Emploi-Québec aimed at helping people enter the labour market or retain a job.

Additional expenses related to participation in an employment-assistance measure

These are expenses that are directly related to participation in an active employment measure or a job entry or re-entry process and that may be incurred, for example, for transportation and childcare. This expression also refers to the financial assistance granted by the public employment services offered by Emploi-Québec to a participant in an active employment measure or a job entry or re-entry process, for the purpose of covering other costs related to their participation.

Adjustment

The additional amount of monthly financial assistance that can be paid to an adult or a family. There are two types of adjustments: the QST adjustment and the adjustment for dependent children.

The QST adjustment is an advance payment of the sales tax credit of the Ministère du Revenu du Québec. The adjustment for dependent children is an amount intended to provide for the essential needs of children in families that receive employment-assistance benefits and that are not covered, or only partly covered, by other financial assistance programs.

Basic benefit

The basic amount of financial assistance granted by the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale to an adult or a family to provide for their essential needs as prescribed by regulation under the Employment-Assistance Program.

Claim

Action taken by the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale to claim back, from an individual or a family, recoverable financial assistance or an amount that should not have been granted. In such cases, the person receives a notice of claim. For example, financial assistance paid to a person waiting to exercise a right (e.g., a CSST or SAAQ indemnity).

Emploi-Québec

An agency of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale. which is entrusted with public employment services and social solidarity services (social assistance). Its mission is to contribute to employment and workforce development, and to combat unemployment, social exclusion and poverty, with a view to economic and social development.

Employment assistance (benefit)

The amount of last-resort financial assistance received by an individual or a family admitted to the Employment-Assistance Program.

Employment Assistance (program)

A Québec government program that grants last-resort financial assistance to persons who are able to work. This program also encourages participants to undertake or continue a job entry or re-entry process and supports them in this process. Under this program, last-resort financial assistance is also granted to persons who have a temporarily or severely limited capacity for employment.

Employment-assistance allowance

Financial assistance paid by the employment-assistance services offered by Emploi-Québec to participants in an active employment-assistance measure that entitles them to such assistance to cover certain needs, including food, clothing, transportation, housing, and telephone services.

Employment insurance (program

Commonly called "unemployment insurance," this federal government program grants temporary financial assistance to persons who are unemployed, ill, or on parental leave.

Family

A family is composed of an adult and that adult's dependent children, or two spouses and their dependent children, or two spouses with no dependent children.

Income support (program)

This comprises all social solidarity programs and measures and employment-assistance services of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale.

Income support for participants in active employment measures

This expression refers to the financial assistance paid by the public employment services offered by Emploi-Québec to a participant in an active employment measure that entitles the participant to such assistance.

Individualized Integration, Training and Employment Plan

A dynamic coaching process that comprises one or more activities decided upon jointly by an officer for the employment-assistance services offered by Emploi-Québec and an employment-assistance recipient who is able to undertake a job entry or re-entry process.

Liquid assets

Amounts of money to which an individual or a family has access in the short term. In general, liquid assets include cash in a bank account or that an individual or a family has in hand, as well as other assets that can be quickly converted into cash, such as savings bonds, term deposits, or shares.

Mixed allowance

Financial assistance that is paid in addition to the basic benefit where one or both of the two adults making up a family have a temporarily or severely limited capacity for employment.

Parental contribution

Assistance that parents are supposed to provide to their children to meet their needs, until such time as the children are considered independent.

Property

All the moveable and immovable goods (furniture, motor vehicle, cottage, residence, etc.) owned by an individual.

Recovery

Actions taken by the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale to recover overpayments.

Regulation respecting income support

In force since October 1, 1999, this Regulation sets out the application framework for the *Act respecting income support, employment assistance and social solidarity*, for example with regard to the eligibility criteria for the

Employment-Assistance Program and the various amounts of financial assistance granted.

Review

A right set out in the *Act respecting income support, employment assistance and social solidarity* that allows an individual or a family to ask for a review of a decision taken by their CLE if that individual or family is not satisfied with the decision.

Severely limited capacity for employment

This expression refers to the situation of a person who is admitted to the Employment-Assistance Program but who is unable, for a permanent or indefinite period and due to major health problems, to undertake a job entry or re-entry process. This expression also refers to the allowance paid to a person in this situation.

Social assistance

Expression commonly used to refer to the last-resort financial assistance paid out under the Employment-Assistance Program.

Special benefits

Additional amounts of financial assistance granted to provide for certain special needs, whether they occur once or regularly (e.g. transportation for medical reasons, eye-glasses, school expenses for children, funeral expenses, etc.).

Spouse

For the purposes of the Employment-Assistance Program, this term applies to the following: two persons who are joined by marriage or civil union and who cohabit; persons who cohabit and are the father and mother of the same child; persons of full age, of the opposite or same sex, who cohabit in a de facto union and who, at any time, cohabited for a period of at least one year.

Temporarily limited capacity for employment

This expression refers to the situation of a person who is admitted to the Employment-Assistance Program but who is unable, for a temporary period of at least a month or due to specific circumstances provided for in the Act, to undertake a job entry or re-entry process. This expression also refers to the allowance paid to a person in this situation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

You can contact your CLE or the Bureau des renseignements et plaintes of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale at the following numbers:

- If you live in the Québec City area
  418 643-4721
- Elsewhere in Québec, toll-free
  1 888 643-4721

You can also contact the Bureau at the following address:

Bureau des renseignements et plaintes
Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale
425, rue Saint-Amable, rez-de-chaussée, bureau 175
Québec (Québec) G1R 4Z1

www.mess.gouv.qc.ca

Emploi
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Québec